



Because You Care

As part of a growing number of retired persons in society today, you take comfort in knowing that medical services will be there when you need them. So it should concern you to know that due to the unscrupulous practices of a small proportion of health care providers, Medicare and Medicaid are being drained of valuable resources that you rely on when it comes to your health and the health of your loved ones.

Many people just like you are unaware of the contributions they can make to help curb and even prevent this drain on our medical system. By volunteering for Operation Restore Trust (ORT), you can become an integral member of the growing effort to help fight Medicare and Medicaid fraud and abuse and the wasting of taxpayer dollars.

What Is Operation Restore Trust?

Announced by President Clinton at the 1995 White House Conference on Aging, ORT is a government-led effort which uses innovative, proactive partnerships across the federal, state, and community levels to identify and report health care waste, fraud and abuse. Heading the operation at the federal level are three agencies within the Department of Health and Human Services: the Administration on Aging, the Office of Inspector General, and the Health Care Financing Administration, which work together with the Department of Justice to combat and prevent this serious national problem.

The Role of AoA

The Administration on Aging (AoA), the only federal agency dedicated to planning and delivering services exclusively to older Americans, cares about the quality of health care provided to older adults and is committed to reducing waste, fraud and abuse in the Medicare and Medicaid programs. AoA is also awarding grants to states and communities to develop public information campaigns and to train retired professionals, such as doctors, nurses, teachers, accountants, lawyers, and others to work with older Americans in their communities to review their benefit

AoA has been involved in ORT from the beginning, training state and local ombudsmen, health insurance counselors, and others to recognize and report suspected cases of fraud and abuse in nursing homes.



ADMINISTRATION ON AGING

How Widespread Is Health Care Waste, Fraud and Abuse?

What Are Fraud and Abuse?

What You Can Do To Help

statements to identify and report potential waste, fraud and abuse. There has never been a greater need for volunteers than there is now. Medicare and Medicaid waste, fraud and abuse are costing our society billions of dollars. That's why we need your help. To ensure quality health care tomorrow, we have to fix the problem today.

In 1998 alone, Medicare lost nearly \$13 billion to fraudulent or unnecessary claims. This problem affects all Americans. It affects those who depend on Medicare and Medicaid by diminishing the quality of the treatment they receive. It affects caregivers by decreasing the funding available for important programs. And it affects everyone who pays taxes by wasting billions of tax dollars.

The United States General Accounting Office estimates that \$1 out of every \$7 spent on Medicare is lost to fraud and abuse.

Most health care professionals are honest, trustworthy, and responsible. The goal of ORT is to weed out those few health care providers who operate with the intention of using Medicare and Medicaid as a pipeline to personal profit. Fraud occurs when an individual or organization deliberately deceives others in order to gain some sort of unauthorized benefit. Medicare and Medicaid fraud generally involves billing for services that were never rendered or billing for a service at a higher rate than is actually justified.

Health care abuse occurs when providers supply services or products that are medically unnecessary or that do not meet professional standards.

First: Treat your Medicare number as you would your credit card number.

Second: Read your explanation of benefits statement carefully. Call your provider or Medicare insurance company for an explanation or clarification of unusual or questionable Medicare charges.

Third: If you have called your provider and your Medicare insurance carrier and continue to have questions, call the Medicare Fraud Hotline at 1-800-447-8477.

Fourth: If you wish to find out how you might volunteer in this effort, call the following AoA-funded project in your state:

Alabama: Alabama Commission on Aging
(334) 242-5743

Alaska: Alaska State Division of Senior Services
(907) 269-3669

Arizona: Arizona Department of Economic
Security (602) 542-4446

Arkansas: Arkansas Seniors Organized for
Progress (501) 661-1401

California: California Health Insurance Counseling
Advocacy Programs Association (714) 560-0309

Colorado: Colorado Division of Insurance
(303) 894-7499, Ext. 355

Connecticut: Connecticut Department of Social
Services (860) 424-5244

Delaware: Department of Health and Social
Services (302) 577-4791

District of Columbia:
AARP Foundation (202) 434-6090
Friendship House (202) 675-9071

Florida: Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council
(727) 577-5151

Georgia:
Atlanta Regional Commission (404) 364-2527;
Department of Human Resources (404) 657-5347

Hawaii: Executive Office on Aging
(808) 586-7281

Idaho: Idaho Medicare Watch Partnership
(208) 334-2219

Illinois: Suburban Area Agency on Aging
(708) 383-0258

Indiana: Division of Disability, Aging and
Rehabilitative Services (317) 232-1734

Iowa: Iowa Department of Elder Affairs
(515) 281-4653

Maine: Department of Human Services Bureau of
Elder Services (207) 624-5335

Maryland: Maryland Office on Aging
(410) 767-1278

Massachusetts: Elder Services of Merrimack
(978) 683-7747, Ext. 350

Michigan: Area Agencies on Aging Association
of Michigan, (517) 886-1029

Minnesota: Minnesota Board of Aging
(651) 296-3839

Missouri: District III Area Agency on Aging
(660) 747-3107

Montana: Missoula Aging Services
(406) 728-7682

Nevada: Nevada Division of Aging Services
(702) 486-3545

New Hampshire: Division of Elderly and Adult
Services (603) 271-3944

New Mexico: New Mexico State Agency on Aging
(505) 827-5890

New York: State Office for the Aging
(518) 474-7329

Ohio: Western Reserve Area Agency on Aging
(216) 621-8010, Ext. 107

Oklahoma: State of Oklahoma Insurance
Department (405) 521-2746

Oregon: Senior Medicare Patrol Project
(503) 945-5812

Pennsylvania: CARIE (215) 545-5728

Puerto Rico: Governor's Office of Elderly Affairs
(787) 721-4560

Rhode Island: Aging 2000, Inc. (888) 684-7200

Texas: Baylor University (254) 710-3601
National Hispanic Council on Aging
(202) 265-1288

Utah: Utah Legal Services (801) 328-0618

Virginia: Virginia Association of Area Agencies
on Aging (804) 644-2804

Washington: Office of the Insurance Counselor
(206) 654-1833

Wisconsin: Coalition of Wisconsin Aging Groups
(800) 488-2596

**Remember —
Who Pays? You Pay
Report Medicare and Medicaid Fraud**

Working in close partnership with its sister agencies in the Department of Health and Human Services, the Administration on Aging provides leadership, technical assistance, and support to the national aging network of 57 State Units on Aging, 655 Area Agencies on Aging, 225 Tribal and native organizations representing 300 American Indian and Alaska Native Tribal organizations and 2 organizations serving Native Hawaiians, plus thousands of service providers, adult care centers, caregivers, and volunteers.

For more information about the Administration on Aging, please contact:

Administration on Aging
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Eldercare Locator: 1-800-677-1116, Monday – Friday, 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. ET